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Aguinaldo's pledge to march into Manila

within twenty days is still unredempted.

When the business failures are 21 per

cent, smaller than last year and 31 per

cent, in 1907, it is not worth while to

listen to those who have the habit of com-

plaining of "these times."

The aggressive campaign at Manila be-

gan on the 25th of March and ended with

the occupation of the insurgent capital on

March 31. The Americans fought six days,

on the seventh they rested.

Ex-Governor Altgeld, who claims to favor

municipal ownership of street railways, is

demanding a 4-cent fare for Chicago—just

what Indianapolis will get if the proposed

reorganization is consummated.

There have been longer campaigns than

the one just closed in the Philippines, but

none of more continuous fighting or harder

service under trying conditions. It was a

brilliant and successful campaign.

Some of the Indiana Grand Army people

are puzzled regarding the 1-cent a mile rate

to the state encampment because a radius

of fifty miles in Illinois is referred to. The

fifty-mile radius applies only to Illinois, all

Indiana being included in the low-rate ar-

rangement.

It is said the substantial people of Cuba

are now circulating and signing a petition

asking President McKinley to order General

Brooke to dissolve the so-called Cuban

Assembly. They realize that it is keeping

the army out of its pay and otherwise re-

tarding the progress of the island.

Among other respects in which our war

with Spain and the Filipinos has been a

record breaking one is that not a single

American soldier or sailor has been taken

prisoner by the enemy, except Lieutenant

Hobson and his men who went voluntarily

within the enemy's lines on a forlorn hope

service.

There does not appear to be any obstacle

in the way of adjusting the Samoan diffi-

culty by arbitration, the only reasonable

method for the adjustment of differences be-

tween first-class nations. Just what these

differences are, however, people generally do

not understand, and, what is more, do

not care so much about what they do

about the outcome of the rather tedious

baseball controversy.

Two or three Aguinaldo organs in the

United States hasten to predict that the

capture of Aguinaldo's capital does not end

the war, because he has 120 miles of rail-

road behind him. A leader who pays no

heed to flags of truce and causes his own

men who cannot stand fire to be killed, can

count on his faithful newspapers in this

country to misrepresent American leaders

and belittle the valor of American soldiers.

The platform of the new political party in

Porto Rico is in the best possible spirit and

shows the leaders in the movement are de-

termined of becoming American citizens in

the best and fullest sense of the term. "We

declare our sincere loyalty to the American

flag and American ideas," they say, "and

heretofore, ourselves to strive to become

worthy of the great nation of which we

are now a part." There is nothing the

matter with the Porto Ricans.

It is somewhat remarkable that there has

never been any serious complaint of the

riders and the equipment of the first 20,000

men sent to Manila, or of that of the troops

which have followed. A few days since

General Otis telegraphed that the army pos-

sesses everything necessary in the way of

supplies. In spite of the long sea voyage and

the unfavorable conditions of the climate

the army in the Philippines has been in fine

condition and well cared for from the first.

The silver peso, which was once the unit

of value in a large part of the Western

world, is passing away. Ecuador is the sev-

enth South American country to demonize

it. Cuba and Porto Rico will soon do so,

and it is only a question of time when Mex-

ico and the Central American states will

follow. The depreciated silver peso, a leg-

acy of Spanish rule, has been a great cur-

rency to Latin-American states, but, happily, like Spanish rule itself, it is pass-

ing away.

France, whose people sustained the Span-

iards in making war as far as they were

able, now proposes to make trouble for

Spain if it shall carry out its proposed policy

of reducing the interest on the entire debt

and paying it in Spanish currency, which is

worth 70 per cent. in gold. As the French

investors purchased many of the bonds at

a great discount, knowing that Spain was

practically bankrupt, they ought to accept

without protest the amount which the bank-

rupt can pay for his assets and income.

The enlisted men of the Second Illinois

Regiment, which has arrived at Port

Tampa, want to be mustered out at Savan-

nah, while the officers are a unit in favor

of their being mustered out in Chicago.

The same difference is likely to arise in

other returning regiments. If mustered out

at Savannah the men would receive travel

pay, amounting to about \$40 each, while at

Chicago they would get two months' extra

pay. The officers found that it paid off in

the South many of them would be stranded

there, and that they would much rather re-

ceive their pay and discharge nearer home.

The officers are probably right.

THE COUNTRY WITH A LAND TAX.

Consular Reports for March contains an

interesting and instructive description of

the land tenure which prevails over the

larger part of Russia. It is interesting and

instructive because it sets forth the work-

ings of a system based upon the theory of

the ownership of agricultural lands by the

government, whose only tax is derived from

rentals of the soil. The land of the peas-

antry, except in small sections of the em-

pire, is not owned by them, and they are

not permitted to purchase it. It is held by

communities called mirs, to which are allo-

cated by the central government a certain area.

The mir is a community having a consider-

able degree of self-government. It elects its

officers by popular vote, regulates its finan-

cial affairs, and so long as it pays the tax

required, it is not molested by the imperial

government.

The authorities of the mir allot to each

head of a family or "soul" a given quantity

of land. The man who has a horse has a

larger allotment than the man who has not,

and the man with children who are able to

labor receives more than the one who has

not. The incapacitated are not given land,

but are kept from starvation by the mir or

community. As is proper under a system

based upon government ownership of land,

the allotment does not carry ownership or

ever, an indefinite period of occupancy. The

tenure is from one to ten years—from three

to five being the most usual. Very properly,

too, under such a system, the individual has

no option, being compelled to take the land

assigned to him by the officers of the mir.

The individual is permitted to present his

case, but from the decision of the officers

there is no appeal. It is often the case,

when the lands are poor, that the peasant,

or mir, tries to shirk his communal re-

sponsibilities by presenting reasons why he

should receive the smallest quantity of land

upon which he is taxed. Nor can the indi-

vidual escape his share of the taxation im-

posed upon the land. Wherever he goes, the

mir to which he belongs keeps track of him

by the aid of the imperial government and

compels him to pay the tax laid upon the

land which has been allotted to him.

This system seems to combine the two es-

sential features of the paternalism neces-

sary to make socialism successful and of

the collection of all necessary revenues

needed to support government by a single

tax on land. Indeed, one may expect the

perfection of the closely allied theories of

paternalism which socialism involves and

the single taxation of land, because it is

one of the natural utilities which some so-

called economists hold should not be-

come private property. Such being the

case, it is proper to look to Russia for the

results of such a system, now that it has

been in force a third of a century. Fortu-

nately the results are given by Mr. Peirce,

who has been connected with the United

States embassy in St. Petersburg, as fol-

lows:

The result is that the mir, feeling that

at the end of a period more or less brief his

allotment will be subject to a redistribu-

tion in which, if he has improved it by

careful cultivation, expending upon it time

and money with an eye to the future, the

greater part of it will probably be taken

from him to be sold to his neighbor, who

characterizes the agricultural classes of

other countries.

It may be said that this condition of the

peasant is due to his ignorance and his

former condition of servitude. There is

something in conditions and environment,

but it is asserted in the same article that

"in those parts of Little Russia, the Baltic

provinces and Poland, where the mir sys-

tem does not exist, not only is the peasant

more animated and cheerful, but much

greater thrift prevails." This is natural;

no tenant will till the land he occupies as

well as the man who has an interest in the

soil and regards the holding as his home.

There is no people belonging to a civilized

land that have so fallen into hopeless

poverty and wretchedness as the peasantry

of Russia, and their condition may be at-

tributed to that paternalism which sup-

presses individual independence and effort.

Nowhere has anything like socialism been

so long practiced as in Russia; nowhere

are the tillers of the soil falling to lower depths

of degradation. This condition has become

so general that the Czar has instituted an

inquiry in order that a remedy may be ap-

plied.

SOME COMING WONDERS.

The two discoveries that are now attract-

ing the attention of the scientific world more

than any others are wireless telegraphy and

liquid air. The world is evidently on the

eve of other interesting discoveries in differ-

ent branches of physics or biology, but these

named seem to involve more surprising and

important results than any others now in

sight. Of the two, wireless telegraphy has

been the more distinctly foreshadowed,

though, from an a priori point of view,

seemingly unattainable. The principle is

not new, but the trouble has been to carry

it into effect. It has been but little more

than fifty years since scientists first demon-

strated the possibility of sending messages

by wire. When Morse made his first ex-

periment, between Washington and Balti-

more, he first tried an insulated wire buried

in a lead pipe under ground, and then one

on posts. This was in 1844, and at that

time probably not a dozen persons in the

United States believed it possible to trans-

mit a message intelligibly that distance,

forty miles, by wire. The most advanced

scientist of that day did not dream that it

could ever be done thousands of miles

across continents and under oceans, and still

less that it would ever be done without

wires. Recent experiments by the Italian

inventor, Marconi, have demonstrated the

entire feasibility of wireless telegraphy

across the English channel, and the Italian-

American electrician, Nicola Tesla, prom-

ises to do it across the Atlantic ocean "with

absolute certainty." As it has already been

done a distance of thirty-two miles, doing

it ten times that distance seems to be only

a matter of development. It is somewhat

remarkable that both of the leading ex-

perimenters in wireless telegraphy should

be Italians, one an English citizen by adop-

tion and the other an American. The Amer-

ican first announced his discovery in 1893,

and in 1897 said he had experimented a

distance of twenty miles. He stated a few

days ago that he had completely remedied

the fatal defect in the Marconi system and

would soon demonstrate the feasibility of